Developing and Evolving a Joint Australian Task List

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Abstract

on a task to develop a list of Australian Joint Essential Tasks (AS JETs). The initial focus of the

defined as those tasks that can or should be conducted by more than one service, which are

This paper describes the development of AS
changes in command and control (C2) enabled by advances in information technology and

ubiquitous C2 and self-synchronisation on Command and Control tasks. It also considers the

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The Australian Joint Essential Tasks (AS JETs) were developed to support the planning for, and

already have developed analogous lists. The United States, have the Universal Joint Task List

tasks.

conducted under different strategies, tactics, doctrine and terminology. For example, Australia has

force. Hence it was decided to develop an indigenous set of tasks suited to the Australian joint

mapped to other countries existing task lists.

tasks that are essential to the preparation for, planning, and conduct of operations. However, the

the US UJTL was developed with an emphasis on Training.

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In contrast, the United Kingdom and Canada have taken an enterprise-wide approach, capturing all core Defence tasks. While this approach has the benefit of encompassing the activities of the entire organization, it was believed that a more focused task list was required for Australian joint operations. This results in a shorter development time, and earlier feedback on the benefits of using a task list. It is envisaged that the scope of AS JETs may grow as their use and visibility increases.

2. AS JETs

The US UJTL was based on a significant historical database; unfortunately this approach could not be used for the development of the AS JETs. Historically, Australia has operated in coalitions, primarily with the US and UK. However, Australia is becoming increasingly self-reliant not only when participating in, but also with leading coalition operations (e.g., UNIFET in East Timor). Thus, Australian historical data may not reflect current and future needs.

Furthermore, there was some resistance to the development and use of Joint Tasks in Australia owing to difficulties experienced in using other countries task lists. For example, the large differences between the sizes of the US and AS forces, and significant differences in US and AS doctrine, meant that many of the US tasks were not directly relevant to Australian joint and combined operations.

Thus, the process to develop the AS JETs needed to not only develop appropriate AS JETs, but also to gain the support of the Joint and Component HQ to ensure that the AS JETs would be adopted. Thus, the development of the AS JETs was a two-stage approach consisting of drawing together information from multiple sources, and then refining the AS JETs through a series of workshops that also served to increase stakeholder commitment to them.

2.1 *Drafting and refining the AS JETs*

The AS JETs have been developed not only with a focus on how the ADF currently operates but also on how they should undertake future joint operations.

The AS JETs were developed by synthesizing relevant information from current and emerging Australian doctrine and strategy, existing task lists, and historical data. Existing tasks lists were obtained from international and single service sources, Force Options Testing and from Headquarters Australian Theatre (HQAST).

Vincente's [1999] work place analysis techniques, provides an effective structure to outline the development of the AS JETs (see Figure 1). The use of historical data in the development of the AS JETs gave a good indication of how the ADF currently conducts operations. This is in line with Vincente's descriptive approach. Current doctrine was utilized so as to gain insight into how the ADF expects to conduct operations, which is consistent with Vincente's normative approach. Finally, as the Joint warfare concept is still evolving, we utilized emerging doctrinal concepts on how the ADF could conduct operations in the future. again, this is in line with Vincente's formative approach.

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                          │             AS JETs                  │
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              │                          │                          │
    ┌──────────────────┐      ┌──────────────────────┐    ┌──────────────────┐
    │   Descriptive    │      │      Normative       │    │    Formative     │
    │   How the ADF    │      │ How the ADF should   │    │  How the ADF can │
    │ currently operates.│    │ operate within a     │    │ operate in the   │
    │                  │      │   joint arena.       │    │     future.      │
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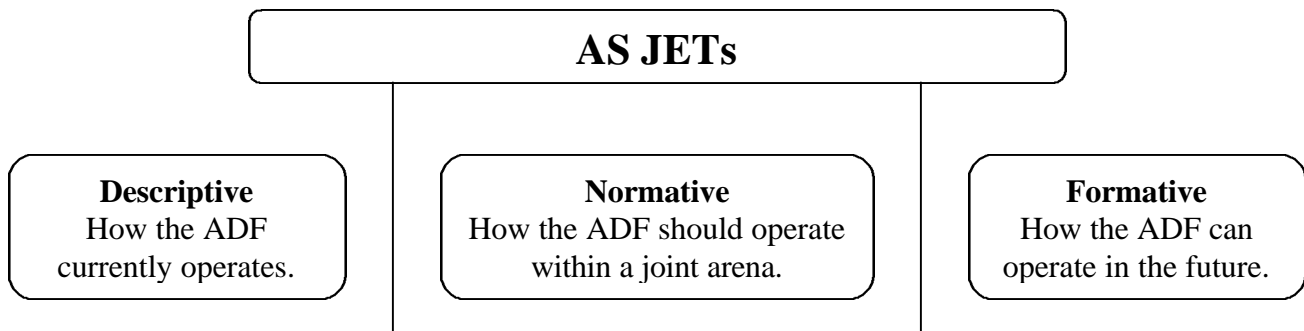
Figure 1. AS JETs Positioned with Vincente's Work. (1999)

The second stage in the development of the AS JETs was a series of workshops that focused on building consensus between the Joint and Component headquarters (HQ). The workshops were attended by representatives from each of the components and the joint agencies. There were at least three workshops conducted for each level in the AS JETs, with each workshop building on the last. Every workshop had a military chair and was run to a loose agenda where open discussions were encouraged. The first workshop for each level tended to focus on the structure of the AS JETs. The second workshop focused on the tasks, ensuring that they were all relevant, consistent and complete. The third workshop focused on the accuracy of the detailed descriptions of the tasks. DSTO's role in these workshops was to ensure that the AS JETs accurately and consistently represented how the ADF conducts operations and that the results of these workshops were relevant to the ADF.

Consistency between the operational and tactical levels was obtained by inviting participants from the Operational workshops to the Tactical workshops. This process is not complete, and additional cross-level workshops are planned to ensure consistency and completeness of coverage of the Strategic and Operational levels. The workshops to date have, however, helped to make the AS JETs accurate, relevant, consistent and complete.

This process has been successful in that the AS JETs have been incorporated in the HQ Australian Theatre (HQAST) operational requirements and into the planning for the next major Australian-led exercise: Crocodile 03.

2.2 *Structure of the AS JETs*

The AS JETS are divided into three areas that focus on each level of command within the Australian Defence Force. The high-level structure of the AS JETs can be seen in Figure 2. There are a number of reoccurring themes across the levels of the AS JETs; however the nature of the tasks underneath the functional areas is different. The Strategic level deals mainly with developing policy, long-term planning for the ADF and developing responses to changes in the regional situation. The Operational level deals with planning theatre infrastructure, objectives and managing resources and the Tactical level focuses on the generation and implementation of plans

within the area of operation. Single service tasks lists and doctrine contribute to these tactical-level tasks. An alternative way to view this is that the Strategic level provides the "ends", the Operational level the "ways" and the Tactical level the "means".

Strategic					
Direction	Intelligence	Shape			Generate & Sustain

Operational					
Command & Control	Intelligence	Shape	Conduct	Protect	Sustain & Administer

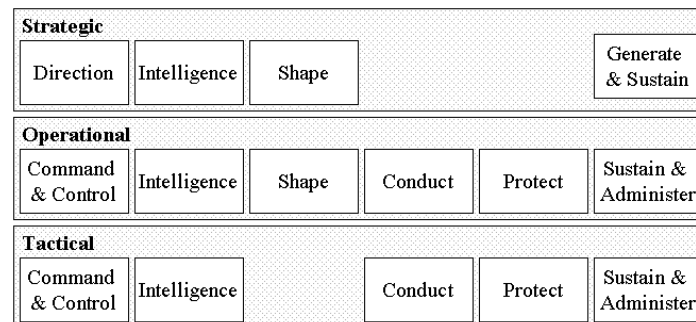| Tactical					
Command & Control	Intelligence		Conduct	Protect	Sustain & Administer

Figure 2. AS JETs Structure

3.   Evolution of the AS JETs

Task lists should not be a static construct. For example, US UJTL is released as 'versions' and updated on a regular basis. There are two types of changes that the AS JETs may go through: the first is an evolutionary change where the list will evolve slowly over time. The AS JETs use by HQAST means that they are already reviewed and modified on a quarterly basis. This continual review should ensure that the AS JETs remain consistent with the evolving doctrine and Vincente's normative approach.
The second is a more radical, revolutionary change in order to remain consistent with the ADF standard practices. Here this paper deals with two new concepts that could impact the AS JETs, the Strategic Corporal and Ubiquitous C2.

3.1   *Strategic Corporal*

It has been argued [Krulak, 1999a; Krulak, 1999b] that the actions of tactical units and commanders are increasingly likely to have strategic implications. The availability of modern technology, the blurring between combatant and non-combatant, the presence of the media and the increase in asymmetric warfare, are increasing the complexity of the operating environment and the speed with which a conflict can escalate. Peacekeeping and peace enforcement operations are particularly complex; encompassing a range of activities from distributing supplies to mid-level conflict and may be highly constrained by political factors, societal views and international opinion. Units must be capable of performing around-the-clock operations and the need to maintain decision speed and the tempo of operations mean that low-level tactical units are often required to make rapid decisions that may have strategic implications.

In Australia it has been suggested that these demands can be met by more flexible, flatter structures and by placing a greater emphasis on the commander's intent, and the rules of engagement rather than detailed plans and direct orders. These changes have the potential to

impact of two main areas of the AS JETs: the development and issuing of plans and orders, and the emphasis on intent and Rules of Engagement.

As in the International Task Lists, the AS JETs already place considerable emphasis on the refinement and implementation of Rules of Engagement, particularly at the Operational and Tactical Level. At the Operational Level there are two related AS JETs: Implement Rules of Engagement and Request Changes, and Coordinate Legal Support.

It might appear that existing tasks concerning the development of plans, and the issuing of orders could be removed. However, course-of-action analysis is still required to determine the commander's intent and resource still need to be allocated to where they can achieve the intent. Furthermore, the focus on the commander's intent brings with it new challenges when operating in a combined or coalition force. In the absence of detailed plans, information about how to interact with coalition partners needs to be transmitted. This is particularly true when coalition partners are not traditional allies, there is limited or no experience with interacting with them and limited or no knowledge of their doctrine, procedures, etc. In the absence of plans for dealing with coalition partners, an even bigger burden will be placed on the Strategic Corporal.

3.2   *Ubiquitous C2*

Ubiquitous C2 is a term used to describe a possible future C2 architecture, where all assets will have a similar and significant C2 capability [Lambert 2000]. Lambert argues that, with such an architecture, C2 responsibility can be devolved away from C2 centres and HQ to platforms.

The concept is based on the potential for systems to exchange information and commands directly to where they are required. In this respect, it differs from the concept of the Strategic Corporal. The Strategic Corporal is forced to make strategic decisions, in part, because they are isolated from superior commanders, while, with Ubiquitous C2, responsibility is deliberately devolved to platforms and units because they have the information and capability to make the required decisions.

Based on this description of Ubiquitous C2, it might appear that the Strategic Direction and Operational Command and Control areas would disappear or shrink. Firstly, because decisions have been devolved to the tactical level, and secondly because all assets then have a similar and significant C2 capability, it might appear that the need to manage information and communications systems would disappear. However, as with the Strategic Corporal, the strategic and communications tasks do not disappear, but focus more on Coalition (rather than internal) interactions and resource allocation.

Lambert argues that, with Ubiquitous C2, trade-off decisions need to be made at the individual, platform, team, and societal levels. Individual and Platform decisions are, however, beyond the current scope of AS JETs.

At the team level, Lambert argues that decisions are made collaboratively, based on communal goals. Thus, course-of-action development and selection becomes a collaborative process, and

decisions are agreed upon rather than issued as orders. Thus, at the tactical level, the AS JET *Issue Plans and Orders* may change to *Select Course of Action*. This generic task allows for both collaborative selection of the course of action, but also allows for units and assets to assume control and issue directives whenever a rapid tempo of operations is required. However, the need to develop and distribute courses of action on which to base these decisions does not disappear.

At the society level, Lambert argues that decisions are reached through negotiation between teams with different objectives and possibility conflicting resource requirements. However, to initiate the negotiation process, the teams need to have been given their objectives, and some resources with which to commence the negotiation process. Negotiating ongoing resource allocations and tasking becomes a tactical-level responsibility.

One of the main roles for the current operational level is the management of conflicting requirements between operations. With this responsibility removed, it may be possible to collapse the Operational and Tactical levels of command under the Ubiquitous C2 paradigm. Indeed, except from differences in the scope of their focus, the Operational and Tactical C2 tasks are very similar in nature. (The exception is that the Operational AS JETs include more liaison tasks.) Other researchers have also proposed that the removal of the Operational level [O'Neill and O'Brien, 2001].

The Strategic AS JETs remain largely unchanged: they determine the initial teams, their intent and look at future force requirements. Communications tasks are also required. Although the emphasis shifts from developing and managing internal infrastructure to determining the impact of coalition and hostile forces infrastructure on our communications infrastructure configuration and operating procedures.

4. **Conclusions**

The Australian Joint Essential Tasks (AS JETs) were developed to support the planning for, and evaluation of Joint Exercises. This approach is consistent with that of our allies who have been operating with such lists for a number of years. The AS JETs were developed in line with current Australian doctrine, standard operating procedures and emerging doctrinal concepts. They consist of a three-level hierarchy that is consistent with current command structures and represents the essential activities to be completed when conducting an operation. Also, the AS JETs were developed through close consultation with representatives from all levels of the Australian Defence Force.

In order to remain consistent with the ADF's standard practice the AS JETs were designed to be a robust list capturing the tasks that need to be done, rather than specifying how to complete the tasks. It is, however, acknowledged that it is possible to change the AS JETs in both an evolutionary and revolutionary manner. This paper has looked at two possible changes that may impact on the AS JETs. The concept of the Strategic Corporal that suggest that the focus of the tasks may need to be changed to accommodate the fact that operations by low-level tactical units can have strategic consequences. With Ubiquitous C2 the scope of the AS JETs at an operational level may decrease, or disappear entirely.

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